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ON THE BREEDING OF THE COMMON SWIFT *APUS APUS* IN IRAQ

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On 8 May 1968 about twenty Common Swifts *Apus apus*, (Linnaeus) were seen going into the thatched roofs of houses at Zakho town, north Iraq. Two *A. apus*, one male and one female, were mist-netted near the houses on the same evening. The female had a well formed egg without shell in the oviduct, and the male had well developed testes.

On 5 May 1972 breeding *A. apus* were collected from the Tobacco Store buildings in Baghdad from a breeding colony of *A. pallidus* (Shelley). Swifts were nesting in the area between the corrugated tin roof and the wall. One *A. apus* (unsexed) was rearing a brood of two nestlings while the other (female) had just laid one egg. All the specimens are deposited in the Bird Collection of the Natural History Research Centre, Baghdad.

Allouse (1961) says that *A. apus* breeds in the northern area as Rassam stresses that it nests in the Yarimja village, between the ceilings of the houses, north of Mosul city. There are two specimens of *A. apus* from Yarimja in the Bird Collection of the Natural History Research Center, Baghdad, one male and one female both collected on 10 April 1957 by Rassam with script (on labels) in Arabic 'nests in roofs'.

In the absence of any mention on whether the collector saw the nest by himself or any note on the gonadal condition

of the collected birds, I wonder whether he got the impression of its breeding by seeing the birds going into the ceilings. However, it is very probable that the birds observed by Rassam were breeding.

The present report forms definite supporting evidence for *A. apus* breeding in north and the first record of its breeding for central Iraq. It is significant to note that in Zakho the breeding colony consisted only of *A. apus*, while in Baghdad a few individuals of *A. apus* were breeding in a colony consisting predominantly of *A. pallidus*.

REFERENCE

Allouse, B. E. 1961. Birds of Iraq. vol. 2 (in Arabic). Ar-Rabitta Press, Baghdad.

الخلاصة

دليل قاطع على تكاثر طير السمامة الاعتيادية في شمال العراق . . .
وتسجيل جديد لتكاثر السمامة الاعتيادية والسمامة الباهنة في بغداد . . .